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AUTHOR Ayewoh, Michael Ehi
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ABSTRACT

A survey of black students enrolled at Mansfield University during the spring 1985 semester found that 66.67 percent of the black students were male, and 33.33 percent female. Of the 75 black students, 25 were freshmen, 22 sophomores, 15 juniors, and 13 seniors. Black students were represented in 19 departments, including business (14 students), criminal justice administration (10), speech communication (7), home economics (6), information processing or computer science (5), and social work (5). Concerns of black students regarding dating and the disparity in the number of males to females were also identified. It is suggested that adequate academic advising (across curricular lines), and social counseling (across racial and sexual lines) would enhance the survivability of black students at the university. Peer study groups are also recommended. Other participants in the design and provision of quality academic programs for students are the black student union, academic departments, the academic advising center, the black caucus, and the academic affairs office. (SW)

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Mansfield University

**UNDERGRADUATE BLACK STUDENTS AT MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY:
Gender, Class Standing, and Major Field of Study**

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by

Michael Ehi Ayewoh, Ph.D.
Special Programs/Learning Resource Center
March, 1985

Research Report no. 3

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Table of Contents

	Page
List of Tables	iii
Acknowledgment	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
DISTRIBUTION OF THE STUDENTS	1
Gender	1
Class standing	2
Major field of study	3
SUMMARY	4
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	4

List of Tables

Table

Page

1. *Distribution of Black students at
Mansfield University by sex 1*
2. *Distribution of Black students at
Mansfield University by class standing 2*
3. *Distribution of Black students at
Mansfield University by major field of study .. 3*

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INTRODUCTION

This paper would present pertinent data pertaining to the distribution of Black students currently enrolled (spring semester, 1985) at the Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. My focus would be: gender of the Black student group, class standing, and major field of study. These data, which are mainly informational (baseline data) in nature, are designed to acquaint student with the affairs of Black students on campus. The information presented here would similarly inform the university community about the representation of Blacks on campus along gender, curricula concentration, and academic classification. Reference to Black students in this report implies Black Americans.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE STUDENTS

Gender

The sexual distribution of undergraduate Black students is presented in Table 1 below. The data indicated that more than half the number of the students are males (66.67%) as opposed to females (33.33%).

Table 1

Distribution of the Black Students at
Mansfield University by Sex

Sex	Distribution	
	Number	Percent
Male	50	66.67
Female	25	33.33
Total	75	100.00

This disparity in the number of males to females might play a major role on the degree of social interaction between the sexes. As a result of this condition of two males to one female, some students have taken to isolation of themselves from the Black student body, loneliness in the cold, name calling, and socialization outside racial/ethnic lines. An informal chat with some Black students on campus revealed among others, these concerns:

- It is becoming very difficult to date a Black girl/guy.
- Some Black men on campus prefer to date white girls.
- Some Black girls date White men just to hurt the Black men.
- Some Black girls are very proud because they feel that

there are not many of them to go around.

Our reactions to the views and concerns raised above are based on some of these questions:

- a. Could it be that some of the Black students (male or female) date from a racial background other than theirs just because of social preferences?
- b. Could it be that some of the Black students (male or female) do not want to be bothered with, especially with respect to dating?
- c. Could the disparity in the ratio of Black ladies to Black men (1 lady to 2 men) be responsible for some of the concerns raised above?

Answers to some of these questions would greatly enhance a thorough understanding of some of the social variables plaguing the Black student on campus. It is hoped that the Black Student Union, the Black Caucus (a group of Black professionals currently employed by Mansfield University), and all concerned with the affairs of the Black students at Mansfield University would join forces in the resolution of the dilemma discussed above. It is also hoped that the university administration identify some of the social determinants of quality mental health for its Black/minority students, and then plan effective and realistic programs based on the findings. I would also like to hear from the Black students concerning possible strategies that should be adopted to improve social life between the sexes at Mansfield University.

Class standing

The class standing of a student is determined by the total number of semester credit hours earned (note: the number of credit hours currently enrolled in is not added to the total credits earned).

Table 2

Distribution of Black Students at
Mansfield University by class Standing

Class Standing	Distribution	
	Number	Percent
Freshman	25	33.33
Sophomore	22	29.33
Junior	15	20.00
Senior	13	17.33
Total	75	99.99 _a

Note: a (Total percent is not exactly 100 because of rounding error)

The data pertaining to class standing of the Black students at Mansfield University as of spring semester, 1985, is presented in Table 2 above. Of the 75 students currently enrolled, 25 (33.33%) are freshmen, 22 (29.33%) sophomores, 15 (20%) juniors, and 13 (17.33%) seniors.

Major field of study

As indicated in Table 3, Black students are represented in 19 major field of study at Mansfield University.

Table 3

Distribution of Black students at
Mansfield University by Major

Major	Distribution	
	Number	Percent
Business	14	18.67
Criminal Justice Admin.(CJA)	10	13.33
*Criminal Justice Admin./ Political Science	1	1.33
Elementary Education	1	1.33
English	1	1.33
Geography	1	1.33
General Studies(Undecided)	9	12.00
Home Economics	6	8.00
Information Processing (Computer Science)	5	6.67
Medical Technology	2	2.67
Music	2	2.67
Physics(Pre-Engineering)	3	4.00
Political Science	1	1.33
Psychology	1	1.33
Special Education	1	1.33
Speech Communication	7	9.33
Sociology/Anthropology	2	2.67
Social Work	5	6.67
Studio Art	1	1.33
Total	75	99.99 ^a

Note:

* (Dual major in CJA and Political Science)

^a (Total percent is not exactly 100 because of rounding error)

Table 3 showed that of the 75 Black students currently enrolled at Mansfield University, 14 are in Business, 11 in Criminal Justice Administration(10 in straight CJA, and 1 dual major in CJA and Political Science), 9 in General Studies(students who have not yet declared their majors), 7 in Speech Communication, 6 in Home Economics, 5 in Information Processing or Computer Science, and 5 in Social Work.

SUMMARY

Majority of the Black students at Mansfield University are males(66.67%).

Of the 75 students, 25 are freshmen, 22 sophomores, 15 juniors, and Of the 75 accessible student population at Mansfield University, 25 are freshmen, 22 sophomores, 15 juniors, and 13 seniors.

Black students are represented in 19 various departments on campus; among others are: Business(14 students), Criminal Justice Administration(10), Speech Communication(7), Home Economics(6), Information Processing or Computer Science(5), and Social Work(5).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The exact percentage of undergraduate Black students to the total student population at Mansfield University is not known as of the time of this research. What is known is that the distribution ranges from 3 to 4 percent. This range does not include the only Black (American) graduate Student(a female student in Music Education). Based on the information presented above, we are consciously optimistic that proper and adequate academic advising (across curricular lines), and social counseling (across racial and sexual lines) would greatly enhance the survivability of the Black students at Mansfield University. Similarly, part of the retention and the general welfare of the Black students lies on the students themselves. I am therefore suggesting that these students form peer study groups along similar major field of study, and along similar courses enrolled in. The Black student Union, all academic departments on campus, the academic advising center, the Black Caucus, and the Academic Affairs office should be actively involved in the design and provision of quality academic and social programs not only for the Black students, but for all students represented on campus. Downtown merchants should be encouraged by the university administration, including the Human Relations Committee to 'carry' cosmetic items representative of the Black culture.

Students should be encouraged by their major advisors (after the advisors have done a thorough evaluation of the quality of services offered by the support departments/committees) to make full use of the following academic and social support avenues on campus:

- . Academic Advising Center
112 South Hall, Extension 4224
Director: Mrs Janice Kennedy
- . Counseling, Career Development and Placement Center
South Hall (2nd floor), Extension 4064/4133
Director: Mr. Francis Kollar
- . Financial Aid Office
107 South Hall, Extension 4129
Director: Dr. Enrico Serine
- . Human Relations Committee
% Mr. Clarence Crisp, Chairperson,
209 Memorial Hall, Extension 4405
- . Registrar's Office
104 Home Economics Center, Extension 4143
Registrar: Mr. John Monoski III
- . Special Programs/Learning Resource Center
Beecher House, Extension 4436
Director/Chairperson: Mr. David Russell

Periodic workshops dealing with academic survival skills, social and environmental adaptation of Black and other racial/ethnic minority students in a predominantly White university and community should be conducted by the various support services at Mansfield University. Special efforts should be made by the support avenues and the university administration to sincerely include Black students and professionals in planning adequate programs affecting Black students on campus, such as Black history courses, literature, race relation courses and workshops, etc.). It is our contention that a meaningful and adaptive institutional reform and commitment in the area of affirmative action, vis-a-vis Black student enrollment, retention, and graduation should come from the top administration at Mansfield University.